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# Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 L-03 H-02 FBIE-00 DHA-02

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---------- 104179
P 121600Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY LOME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1019

C O N F I D E N T I A L LOME 1795

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: CASC (WILSON, JAMES WILLIAM), TO
SUBJ: DETENTION OF AMERICAN CITIZEN

REF: STATE 198585

1. ON AUGUST 12 CONOFF MET WITH FORMER MINISTER OF JUSTICE BAWBADI CHANGO, CURRENTLY DEPUTY HEAD OF GENDARMERIE NATIONALE AND IN CHARGE OF INVESTIGATION OF ACCUSATIONS AGAINST WILSON AND HIS SUBORDINATES. CHANGO RETRACTED HIS MID-JULY ASSERTION THAT HE WAS AUTHORIZED TO RELEASE WILSON PENDING RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION. CHANGO SAID THAT GENDARMERIE OFFICERS CONDUCTING INVESTIGATION HAD INDEED FOUND INCONTROVERTABLE EVIDENCE OF MALFEASANCE ON WILSON'S PAR T,
AND THAT HE IS AWAITING RECEIPT OF A FEW DOCUMENTS FROM THE STATE INSPECTOR'S OFFICE(BUREAU DE L'INSPECTORAT GENERAL) BEFORE HIS REPORT ON THIS AFFAIR CAN BE SUBMITTED TO MINISTRY OF JUSTICE FOR DECISION ON PROSECUTION. CHANGO SAID HE FULLY REALIZES NEED FOR SPEEDY DECISION IN WILSON'S CASE, AND OFFERED HIS GOOD OFFICES TO PRESSURE STATE INSPECTOR'S OFFICE INTO PROVIDING NEEDED DOCUMENTS TODAY.

2. CHANGO SAID THAT ONLY MINISTER OF JUSTICE IS AUTHORIZED RELEASE WILSON PENDING A COURT DECISION IN HIS CASE. HE OPINED THAT THE JUSTICE MINISTER MIGHT BE IN A POSITION TO RELEASE WILSON AS SOON AS HE HAS OFFICIALY RECEIVED INVESTIGATION REPORT, PERHAPS AS EARLY AS AUGUST 13, AND LEFT CONSOFF WITH CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT CHANGO INTENDED SO RECOMMEND TO JSUTICE
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MINISTER.

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3. CHANGO SAID THAT PRESIDENT EYADEMA WOULD BECOME INVOLVED ONLY IF WILSON IS FOUND GUILTY BY COURT AND IF PRESIDENT CHOOSES TO DEPORT HIM.

4. CONOFF ADVISED CHANGO OF STRONG INTEREST OF SENATORS STENNIS AND EASTLAND IS SEEING WILSON'S CASE BROUGHT TO EARLY CONCLUSION. HE WAS CLEARLY IMPRESSED BY THIS INFORMATION, AND CONSOFF BELIEVES THIS EXPRESSION OF SENATROIAL INTEREST HAS BEEN USEFUL. CHANGO HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH MINISTER DOGO, WHO INTENDS TO WEIGH IN STRONGLY ON WILSON'S BEHALF AS SOON AS HIS DOSSIER IS DELIVERED TO JUSTICE MINISTER.

5. COMMENT: BELIEVE ANY EMBASSY PROTEST OVER WILSON'S CONTINUED DETENTION WOULD NOT BE EFFECTIVE AT THIS POINT AND HIS BEST CHANCE FOR EARLY RELEASE, PENDING FINAL DECISION ON CASE, RESTS IN QUIET PRESSURES BY MINISTER DOGO ON HIS BEHALF. IN LONG RUN, EMBASSY PROTEST MIGHT EVEN BE DETRIMENTAL. SHOULD WILSON BE FOUND GUILTY, PRESIDENT EYADEMA WILL BE FACED WITH OPTION OF DEPORTING WILSON OR APPROVING JAIL SENTENCE. IT COULD BE EASIER FOR PRESIDENT TO CHOOSE DEPORTION IF HE COULD DO SO AS MAGNANIMOUS ACT AND NOT IN APPARENT RESPONSE TO AMERICAN PRESSURES. YOUNG

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